

son; "but to a man whose pleasure is intellectual, London is the place." And the intellect of London is centred in Fleet Street, which is, in a sense, its most famous thoroughfare. At the time of the Romans it was little more than a rough road running through open country. It is here that was situated that ancient burial-place of the Roman soldiers, the Vallum, near the Praetorian camp at Lud Gate. "In process of time," as Mr. Chancellor tells us, "houses and shops began to arise along the once country road—a road which even in the year 1325 was described as 'Fletestrete in the suburb of London.'" There is a mention of it in 1228 under its earlier name of Fleet Bridge Street, but it would appear that its present designation was not given it till the beginning of the fourteenth century. In 1311 five members of the royal household were arrested for committing a burglary there. By 1543, as may be seen by Wyngaerde's "View," Fleet Street was relatively quite a thickly populated place. For many years, even centuries, it was a famous shopping quarter. In Plantagenet times a shopkeeper there supplied Edward II with boots at 5s. a pair, and a couple of centuries or so later Catherine of Aragon dealt at a shop having the sign of "The Coppe" in the same thoroughfare. On the north side of Fleet Street, at the south-west corner of Chancery Lane, Izaak Walton, the Gentle Angler, had a linen-draper's shop which he shared with John Mason, a hosier. As late as the thirties of the last century ladies used to promenade Fleet Street with their lap-dogs and do their shopping.

But Fleet Street's most enduring memories are those connected with men of letters and the Fourth Estate. In the past it was the accepted home of those who gained a living by the production of books, to-day it belongs to the Press, that mighty organ "whose leaders make statesmen quail," and whose "pen is mightier than the sword." Napoleon Bonaparte is credited with the dictum: "Four hostile newspapers are more to be feared than a thousand bayonets." But the newspaper Press was little more than an infant in his day, and its power was nothing compared to what it is now with its huge circulation. In a curious old guide-book, "The Picture of London for 1819," we learn that at that time "the circulation of each newspaper varies from 750 to 4,000 per day. Of the morning papers there are sold altogether about 12,000 daily. Of the daily evening papers, about 10,000; and of those published every other day, about 18,000. There are also about 26,000 sold of the various Sunday papers, and about 20,000 of the other weekly papers. In all, the enormous number of 220,000 copies per week." Such was the strength of the London newspaper Press not quite one hundred years ago. Unduly impressed by the foregoing figures, the same authority exultantly exclaims: "What a wonderful idea is afforded of the agency and influence of the Press in this empire; and how easily is it explained that we are the most free, and the most intelligent, although the most abused people on the face of the earth!"

In his "Annals of Fleet Street" Mr. Chancellor has

compiled a work full of interest, both from the topographical and the historical points of view. We could have wished, though, that it had been a little more anecdotal; there is a fund of anecdote in connection with Fleet Street life. The illustrations, mostly depicting buildings which have long since disappeared, add considerably to the value of the book, as they are all after contemporary drawings and prints. Among them is an interesting view of Bridewell in 1725, where obstreperous females used to be whipped according to the pleasure of the presiding alderman, and effectually cured of all desire to smash windows or commit other misdemeanours; but *tempora mutantur, et nos mutamur in illis!* The author states in a "Foreword": "The curious thing is that there has never before been a history of Fleet Street written." Has he, then, never heard of Thomas Archer's "The Highway of Letters," published, we think, about twenty years ago?

"The Row" is, of course, Paternoster Row, which is within a stone's throw of Fleet Street; but the Pater Nosters, or rosaries, of olden times, which gave the thoroughfare its name, have long since given way to books and stationery, and publishing houses famous the world over now occupy the places of the makers and the vendors of the prayer-beads. Mr. Aitken has compiled this short account of London's great publishing centre in connection with the removal of the Messrs. Partridge from the Row, where they have been for over sixty years, to their new premises in the Old Bailey. The booklet is daintily got up, and contains some interesting illustrations.

"To anyone who has reached a very advanced age," wrote Sheridan, "a walk through the streets of London is like a walk in a cemetery." In "Famous Houses" Mr. St. John Adcock revives much of London's literary past for us, and his brother supplies sketches of over seventy of the still existing houses where famous authors and artists once lived. Surely the two Disraelis might be considered such, yet they are scarcely mentioned in the volume, and neither Isaac's residence in Bloomsbury Square, nor Benjamin's birthplace in Theobald's Road, is depicted; while the Bloomsbury Square house alone receives a bare mention. Nevertheless the book is crammed full of information, and makes capital reading, and besides the views of our literary shrines it contains many portraits of literary and artistic celebrities. As a guide to the London world of letters of the past it will prove invaluable.

### The Gospels in Verse

*The Saviour of the World.* By CHARLOTTE M. MASON, Vols. I-V. (Kegan Paul and Co. 2s. 6d. net each.)

THIS work represents a high ambition for a noble but difficult task—a metrical rendering of the life and words of Christ—the four Gospels in verse. The modesty of Miss Mason's *apologia* almost disarms criticism. She makes no pretension, but hopes that some day "a poet of the future may arise who shall give the world its great epic." She herself has worked for many years

at this labour of love, marked by the deepest faith and reverence. Her idea is to compel attention and arrest the mind by a new version of the Scriptures, neglected by some, grown too familiar to others. There is real value in this attitude. Renan's Life of Jesus, despite his scepticism, was a revelation to many. So even was his scepticism, was a revelation to many. So even was Farrar's verbose elongation of the Gospels. Those who study Miss Mason's patient work should certainly find new light, and the kindling of a new desire to think more of the deep philosophy which surrounds the personality and life of the Saviour. There are two sides to Miss Mason's work: one, the metrical paraphrase of the actual words and incidents of the Gospels; the other, her own original thoughts and comments. The first is often stilted and rugged, halting, and devoid of rhythm, particularly the blank verse. The second is sometimes excellent. There are many passages containing thoughts of clear penetration into the problems and mysteries of life, written with a spontaneous and unshackled freedom of style. Some of the odes have a grace and a charm quite their own, and rise to a level which shows a true poetic instinct.

Faith is independent of modern higher criticism, nor need conflict with science. So we read in the opening verses in the Prologue to the Gospel according to St. John:

Whence came the world and how were all things made?  
All things that be to-day are of the Word.  
No longer baffled we, by tortuous quest—  
Whether all life proceed from two or many,  
Whether our origins be high or low—  
Those things concern the manner of our making :  
In Him was life; that is enough to know.

In the Fourth Book are some charming stanzas on child-life:—

In the kingdom are the children,  
You may read it in their eyes :  
All the freedom of the Kingdom  
In their careless humour lies.

Very winsome are the children—  
Say, whence comes it, their sweet grace?  
Small the pains they take for goodness,  
Scarcely know they Duty's face.

Frail and faulty little lieges—  
Yet well-pleasing to their King :  
Scanty thought they take to serve Him,  
Yet the chosen offering bring.

Ours the weary, long endeavour ;  
Theirs, the happy entering in :  
Ours, to strive and wait and labour ;  
Theirs, to joy before the King.

\* \* \* \* \*

On the children's brows no witness  
That themselves do fill their thought ;  
In the children's hearts no strivings  
That to them be honour brought.

Therefore finds the King an entrance ;  
Freely goes He out and in ;  
Sheds the gladness of His presence ;  
Doth for babes great victories win !

Such an inspiration from the text, "Suffer little children to come unto Me," delights the heart, and recalls Zachariah's description of the new Jerusalem, when "the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in the streets thereof." In the story of the raising of Lazarus this stanza describes the "sweet home of Bethany":—

The house of a friend ! How good to know,  
In hours of anxious, drear distress,  
That there's a place where we may go  
For company in loneliness ;  
Where sympathetic hand shall press  
Our own when life is hard to bear ;  
A sheltered, still and sweet recess  
Where we may come for smile or tear,  
Of welcome well assured ere yet our steps draw near.

Miss Mason's sympathetic treatment of the Gospel story of the ministry of Christ catches the echo of the Divine sympathy. Love for the Master, love for His teaching, love for His disciples, prompts all her thoughts. She is an earnest believer in the faith once delivered to the saints. Those, like herself, entrusted with the responsibility of education, will find her work of great use in illustrating the Gospel narrative, and in awaking thought and arousing interest in elder pupils, too often wearied by the conventional "Scripture lesson." The books are nicely presented, and well printed. There are many photographs after famous religious paintings; some of less-known pictures of interest. Three more volumes are promised to complete this work, which should merit an important place among books of sacred anthology.

### A Crushing Indictment

*Against Home Rule: The Case for the Union.* By the Rt. Hon. A. J. BALFOUR, M.P., and Others. With an Introduction by SIR EDWARD CARSON, K.C., M.P., and a Preface by A. BOSAN LAW, M.P. Edited by S. ROSENBAUM. (Frederick Warne and Co. 1s. net.)

Of the many books which are appearing on the subject of Home Rule for Ireland, this is perhaps the best we have seen: it is the composite production of a number of contributors, including an ex-Premier, four ex-Chief-Secretaries for Ireland, an ex-Lord-Lieutenant, two ex-Law Officers, and other men of ability who have specially studied the Irish question. It not only destroys the case for Home Rule, but it states generally what will be the constructive policy for Ireland when a Unionist Government returns to power. Since it was written, the Home Rule Bill has been introduced into Parliament, containing some points, the creation, for instance, of a nominated Senate, which had not been anticipated. They increase the objections to the Government's policy. But it is with the book rather







